

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 06491 200149Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 6491

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TAGS: PFOR, MX, TECH, SCUL, EAID,

SUBJ: ECHEVERRIA'S INSTITUTE OF THIRD WORLD STUDIES

REF: MEXICO 6247

1. THE PRESIDENT'S MAN OF CONFIDENCE (FERNANDO GUITERREA BARRIOS (UNDERSECRETARY OF INTERIOR) CALLED ON ME AT THE RESIDENCE AT HIS REQUEST. HE SAID PRESIDENT WAS VERY APPRECIATIVE OF OUR VISIT TO HIS INSTITUTE OF THIRD WORLD STUDIES AND OF OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH HIM ON SAME EVENING OF THE VISIT. HE WISHED TO STRESS AGAIN THAT INSTITUTE WAS NOT POLTICALLY OR IDEOLOGI- CALLY MOTIVIATED BUT WOULD BE ORIENTED SOLELY TO HELP THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THIRD WORLD, TO FACILITATE TRANSFER OF MEDIUM-LEVEL TECHNOLOGY AND TO FOMENT NUTRITION RESOURCES.

2. THE PRESIDENT REALIZED THAT POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS HAD FORCED HIM FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS TERM TO TAKE STRONGLY PRO-THIRD WORLD STANCE AND TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF BEING ANTI-FIRST WORLD. IN HIS OPINION THERE WERE FEW MEXICANS WHO HAD WORKED AS CLOSELY WITH THE UNITED STATES AS HE HAD OVER HIS CAREER, WHO HAD SUCH A TRUE APPRECIATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE THIRD WORLD AND TO THE WORLD IN GENERAL AND WHO HAD SUCH A BASIC (ALTHOUGH WELL DISGUISED PUBLICLY) FRIENDSHIP FOR THE UNITED STATES. THIS CAN BE CONFIRMED BY THE INTENSE COOPERATION ON BILATERAL MATTERS WHICH HE HAD ALWAYS GIVEN TO THE UNITED STATES. ON THE OTHER HAND, ECHEVERRIA
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MEXICO 06491 200149Z

WAS INTENSELY (AND INCREASINGLY) DISTRUSTFUL OF SECOND

WORLD AND HE WANTED TO ASSURE US THAT IN ANY CONFRONTATION OR CHOICE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE COMMUNIST WORLD HE WAS FIRMLY ON OUR SIDE.

3. THE INSTITUTE OF THIRD WORLD STUDIES (WHICH HE PLANS TO HEAD HIMSELF) WOULD NEVER BE A TRUE SUCCESS UNLESS IT HAD COOPERATION AND INPUTS BOTH FROM THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE UNITED STATES. ECHEVERRIA HOPED THAT HE WOULD HAVE THE UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND SPECIFICALLY THE STATE DEPARTMENT ON THIS AND THAT A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS AND THE THIRD WORLD INSTITUTE WOULD DEVELOP. SIMILARLY, HE HOPED HE WOULD HAVE U.S. SUPPORT IN SEEKING UNITED NATIONS COOPERATION AND BACKING FOR THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTE.

4. GUTIERREZ BARRIOS TOLD ME THAT NEWEST WRINKLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE INSTITUTE HAD JUST BEEN REVEALED TO HIM OVER THE WEEKEND BY THE PRESIDENT. HE HAD ACQUIRED STILL ANOTHER BUILDING, THIS ONE CONTIGUOUS TO HIS OWN RESIDENCE, WOULD SERVE TO HOUSE A PROPOSED SUBSIDIARY OF THE INSTITUTE DEDICATED SOLELY TO STUDIES OF THE UNITED STATES AND OF U.S.-MEXICAN RELATIONS. IT WAS HERE, THE PRESIDENT FELT, THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS COULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT INPUT. HE ASSURED ME THAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBSIDIARY INSTITUTE WOULD IN NO WAY BE DIRECTED TO EMBARRASS THE U.S. BUT, ON THE CONTRARY, WOULD STRENGTHEN RELATIONS. THE PRESIDENT WAS WELL AWARE THAT MEXICO'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WOULD DEPEND ON CONTINUING IMPROVED U.S. COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION.

5. COMMENT: WE MUST GIVE SOME CREDENCE TO ECHEVERRIA'S FREQUENT REITERATIONS OF THE NECESSITIES WHICH HAVE CONSISTENTLY FORCED HIM TO ADOPT LEFTIST STANCES BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD DURING HIS ADMINISTRATION. AT THE SAME TIME, WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT HE IS A COMPLEX MAN AND THAT THERE MIGHT EVEN BE SOME ELEMENT OF "BLACKMAIL" IN HIS APPROACH TO US FOR ASSISTANCE ON HIS INSTITUTE OF THIRD WORLD STUDIES. IN ANY CASE, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MEXICO 06491 200149Z

THAT THIS PROPOSAL BE GIVEN CAREFUL AND SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION; WHATEVER WE DO, THE INSTITUTE WILL BE A REALITY AND ECHEVERRIA WILL CONTINUE TO FIGURE IN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL SCENE. THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE IT IS TO OUR OVER-ALL ADVANTAGE TO ATTEMPT TO PARTICIPATE CONSTRUCTIVELY AND ACTIVELY IN ORDER TO EXERT SOME SALUTARY INFLUENCE ON ITS ACTIVITIES.

6. THE PROPOSAL AT THIS STAGE IS PURELY A PRELIMINARY
SALES PITCH AND WE WOULD HOPE TO HAVE MORE CONCRETE
IDEAS OF HOW WE MIGHT PARTICIPATE AT TIME GOES ON.
IT IS NOT TOO EARLY, HOWEVER, FOR THE U.S. TO GIVE CAREFUL
THOUGHT TO THE MATTER IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT TAKE THE
INITIATIVE WITH POSITIVE SUGGESTIONS OF HOW WE MIGHT
PARTICIPATE, WHICH MIGHT BE MORE REALISTIC THAN ECNEVERRIA.S
REQUESTS. I RECOMMEND THAT THIS MESSAGE BE SHARED WITH
AID AND WITH THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION,
AS WELL AS THE PEACE CORPS (PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE
EMPHASIS ECHEVERRIA SEEMS TO GIVE TO LOW-LEVEL AND
MEDIUM-LEVEL TECHNOLOGY.)
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